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X.—THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE SPENSERIAN PASTORAL.

Modernity has taught us, with some reason, to laugh at pastorals. Nevertheless there is deep humanity in those artificial songs of shepherds and shepherdesses. With the frigid pipings of Thyrsis and Corydon we are indeed out of tune. Since, however, the pastoral fascinated Theocritus, Virgil, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Spenser, who wrote for all time, we ought to approach the outworn form in a spirit of serious sympathy. Even proud idealists sometimes waver. Poetry must furnish, at times, an escape from life—not always the clarion call to life's struggles. Men took the pastoral in order to flee for a moment into Arcadia, to clothe in pleasant vagueness confessions of the delightful miseries of calf-love, though strife stole too often even into Arcadia and goaded the shepherds into worldly bickerings. We have the same aspirations to-day as those poets when they wrote their pastorals,—moods that are not mere toys ; but because hope is edged with doubt, we trifle with our dreams in ways no less artificial than the pleasant game of pastoral-making. We have not outgrown the pastoralist's moods.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the influence of Spenser's *Shepheards Calender* on the English pastoral during its period of greatest activity, from 1579 to the close of the seventeenth century. The story of Spenser's attempt to make the formal eclogue native in England and of the interesting but vain attempts of his imitators to give it a permanent place among the cherished forms of English poetry has never been carefully told.

It is not worth while to ruminate long over the well-considered antecedents of *The Shepheards Calender*. In 1579

Italianate England was awakened by the fresh notes of an April-tide music, pipings at times thin and hesitant, but sweet and new. Barclay and Googe and Turberville had blown the serannel pipes of Mantuan. But nobody had listened. Now a young anonymous poet who called himself Colin Clout came and enriched English poetry with the indolent laughing sunshine of Theocritus, with the graver music of Virgil, with the homely touches and quarrelsome moralising of Mantuan, above all with the fairy grace of Clement Marot. With his compound of easy Elizabethan colloquialism, of the revived magic of Chaucer's tongue, of the rough Lancashire dialect, and of some quaint coinages, he was one of the greatest builders of a new and varied literary language for the remarkable throng of poets who were already impatient to give Elizabeth's England a supreme place in the world's literature.

It has frequently been observed that Spenser failed to work out his own innovations thoroughly, that month and mood do not always correspond, that there is too little English nature in the *Shepheards Calender*. Nevertheless literary England was entranced. The *Shepheards Calender* was reissued in 1581, 1586, 1591, and 1597. The critics lacked a hundred brazen tongues to give full vent to their exuberant praise.¹

Spenser's pastoral imitators confined themselves for the most part to the formal eclogue. Guarini and Tasso became the great forces in the pastoral drama, and into this the spirit of Spenser made few incursions. In the pastoral novel Sannazaro and Sidney and Montemayor reigned supreme, although men like Lodge and Greene brought occasional echoes of the *Shepheards Calender* into their tales. The *Polyolbion* of Drayton and the *Britannia's Pastorals* of

¹ Sidney, Harvey, Puttenham, Webbe, Meres, Drayton, practically all of the contemporary critics, welcomed the *Calender* at sight. In a more sceptical day, Dryden liberally meted out praise.

Browne have much talk of shepherds, but owe their being to the *Faërie Queene*. From the pageant of rivers which assembled at the marriage of the Thames and the Medway, as described in the fourth book of the *Faërie Queene* with many a cunning reference to associations legendary and historical which haunted their shores, Drayton derived his idea of a colossal poetic Baedeker to commemorate every brook in Merry England. From the tangled story of Florimel, which shattered the elaborate structure of the *Faërie Queene*, William Browne conceived his garrulous story of Marina. Browne's men and women are merely Spenser's knights and ladies unhorsed. As for Drayton, he was much more interested in Guy of Warwick, Arthur, and Robin Hood than in the shepherds and shepherdesses who gathered garlands by his river-banks.

The earliest important attempt to follow Spenser was made by George Peele in his pretty drama, *The Arraignment of Paris*, published in 1584, but said to have been presented in 1581, only two years after the appearance of the *Shepherds Calender*. In this play a genuine formal eclogue is introduced in which Colin and his comrades mingle strangely with Paris, CEnone, and the stately Greek goddesses on Mount Ida. In the third act Diggon, Hobbonol, and Thenot talk with Colin as he is lamenting the cruelty of his love Thestylis. Peele gallantly revenges his master's misfortunes in love. For later, when we are shown poor Colin's grave, Thestylis is condemned by Venus to love an ill-favoured rustic who spurns her. In 1589 Peele published *An Eclogue Congratulatorie* to Robert, Earl of Essex. The dialogue between Piers and Palinode, the two interlocutors of *Maye*, with its stiff archaisms from the *Calender*, shows a poet vainly endeavoring to use the new instrument.

There were other faltering imitations which, though not published until English poetry had become more fluent, were

probably composed in those years of experiment. To the little group of elegies on Sidney, collected and edited by Spenser in 1595, it was probably Ludowick Bryskett who contributed *A Pastoral Æglogue upon the Death of Sir Phillip Sidney, Knight*, in which Lycon and Colin lament in "measured terms and in the language of the *Calender*. In his *Poetical Rhapsody* (1602) Francis Davison published *A Dialogue betweene two shepheards, Thenot and Piers, in praise of Astrea*, by Lady Mary, Countess of Pembroke, written in the same manner.

That Robert Greene was not insensible of the insipidity which is the constant pitfall of this form, is shown by his burlesque eclogue between Doron and Carmela.¹ More than a century later Gay took virtually the same method, with his coarse and boisterous *Shepherd's Week*, to deal a death-blow to the nerveless pastorals of Ambrose Philips. But in his own day Greene mocked alone; and even he wrote a serious pastoral lyric of the Spenserian type in *Greene's Mourning Garment* (1590).

In 1590, Thomas Watson and Thomas Lodge also entered the lists. Watson's dull English version of his dull Latin elegiac eclogue on Francis Walsingham, slightly influenced by the *Calender*, and containing verses in praise of Spenser, is worth only bare mention. Lodge's pastoral novel, *Rosalynde, Euphues Golden Legacie*, set Shakespeare singing of woodland and shepherd and eternal youth. It contains a Spenserian *Eglog betweene Montanus and Coridon*, prototypes of Shakespeare's youthful lover Silvius and the aged shepherd Corin:—

Coridon.

"Say shepheards boy, what makes thee greet so sore?
Why leaves thy pipe his pleasure and delight?
Yong are thy yeares, thy cheekes with roses dight:
Then sing for joy (sweet swaine) and sigh no more.

In *Menaphon* (1589.)

Montanus.

Ah (Coridon) unmeet is melodie
 To him whom proud contempt hath overborne :
 Slaine are my joyes by Phoebes bitter scorne,
 Farre hence my weale and nere my jeopardy."

We must pause to see the shepherds becoming thoroughly human in *As You Like It*:¹—

Cor. " This is the way to make her scorn you still.
Sil. O Corin that thou knew'st how I do love !
Cor. I partly guess, for I have lov'd ere now.
Sil. No, Corin, being old, thou canst not guess,
 Though in thy youth thou wast as true a lover
 As ever sigh'd upon a midnight pillow :
 But if thy love were ever like to mine,—
 As sure I think did never man love so,—
 How many actions most ridiculous
 Hast thou been drawn to by thy fantasy?"

We have been led, by a strange by-path in poetry, from the debate of crabbed age and youth in *Februarie* to these gentle lines with their smiling indulgence towards amorous shepherds. In *Phillis* (1593) Lodge imitated the *Januarie* in *Egloga Prima*; *Demades*, *Damon*. Lodge's enthusiasm flickered out in four dull eclogues printed in *A Fig for Momus* (1595).

Most of these attempts to divine the secrets partly revealed by the herald of modern English poetry had proved sorry enough. It remained for Michael Drayton to imitate effectually his master's most spirited melodies. To the formal eclogue he brought an English yeoman's temperament and something of Chaucer's sly sense of humour. He began in 1593 with the *Shepheards Garland*, *Fashioned in nine Eglogs*, the first elaborate imitation of the *Calender*. He reprinted a carefully polished version in 1606, with an added eclogue; and in 1619 he again brought forth the ten

¹ Act 2, Sc. iv.

under the title *Pastoralls Containing Eglogues*, still further, though only slightly, revised.¹ It does not seem to me that his revisions lessened his indebtedness to Spenser. But they did spoil some good poetry in favor of decorous commonplace lines. Happily, while he was enervating his eclogues, he was creating, in such works as *The Muses Elysium*, a type of pastoral that was brimfull of youth. The eclogues in 1619 were introduced by an entertaining preface, as follows:—

“The subject of pastorals as the language of it ought to be poor, silly, and of the coarsest woof in appearance ; nevertheless, the most high and noble matters of the world may be shadowed in them, and for certain sometimes are : but he who hath almost nothing pastoral in his pastorals but the name, (which is my case), deals more plainly, because detracto velamine, he speaks of most weighty things.

“Master Edmund Spenser had done much for the immortality of his name, had he only given us his *Shepherd's Calendar*, a masterpiece, if any. . . . Spenser is the prime pastoralist of England. My pastorals, bold upon a new strain, must speak for themselves and the tabor striking up, if thou hast in thee any country quicksilver, thou hadst rather be at the sport, than hear thereof. Farewell.”

¹ Drayton's revisions must be considered carefully. Mr. Oliver Elton has done much painstaking work of this kind in his *Michael Drayton* (London, 1907). He notes changes in the ordering of the eclogues in the second edition. No. 4 becomes No. 6, No. 6 No. 8, No. 8 No. 4, and No. 9 No. 10. The added eclogue becomes No. 9. He notes also certain changes in the material of the eclogues which do not concern us here. For my own purposes, however, I am forced to transcribe variations in the readings wherever any question of the waxing or the waning of Spenser's influence is involved. If I understand Mr. Elton aright, he feels that Drayton in his later work tended to draw away somewhat from Spenserian influence, an impression which, without the slightest derogation of Drayton's remarkable qualities, I cannot share, even in the case of these pastorals. Many of Drayton's latest works, notably his most ambitious poem, the *Polyolbion*, are full of Spenser. *The Mooncalf*, again, is an elaborate imitation of *Mother Hubberds Tale*. As for the pastorals, the reader can form his own opinion from my footnotes. For my standard text I use Drayton's first version, both because I consider it to be the best poetry and because I am trying, as far as possible, to employ the chronological method. A, B, and C stand in my notes for the editions of 1593, 1606, and 1619 respectively.

The first eclogue, in which "Poore Rowland, malcontent, bewayles the winter of his griefe,"¹ is in the manner of Spenser's *Januarie*. The second eclogue follows the motive of *Februarie*. Aged Wynken reproves Moth for his youthful intemperance in love, and edges his remonstrances with a simile drawn from the fable with which Spenser's old Thenot sought to reprove the youthful Cuddie:—

"And though thou seemest like the bragging bryer,
As gay as is the mornings Marygolde,
Yet shortly shall thy sap be drie and secre,
Thy gaudy Blossomes blemished with colde."

The next eclogue contains a charming imitation of Spenser's famous Eliza song in *April*:—

"O thou fayre silver Thames! O cleerest chrystall flood!"²
"Beta alone the Phoenix is of all thy watry brood,
The queene of virgins onely shee.
Make her a goodly Chapilet of azur'd Columbine,
And wreath about her Coronet with sweetest Eglentine:
Bedeck our Beta all with Lillies,
And the dayntie Daffadillies,
With Roses damask, white, and red, and fairest flower delice,
With Cowslips of Jerusalem, and cloves of Paradice."³

¹Quoted from the argument. Drayton prefixed arguments, in the manner of Spenser's doggerel labels for each canto of his "*Faërie Queene*," to each eclogue in A but omitted them in B and C. Compare ll. 1 and 2 in each edition:

- A: "Now Phoebus from his equinoctial Zone,
Had task'd his teame unto the higher spheare."
B: "Phoebus full out his yearly course had run,
Whom the long winter laboured to outweare."
C: "Phoebus full out his yearly course had run
(The woeful Winter labouring to outweare)."

Line 2 in C is thoroughly in the manner of the *Shepheards Calender*.

²B and C are more Spenserian:

"Stay Thames to heare my song, thou greate and famous flood."

Compare Spenser's *Prothalamion*:

"Sweete Themmes! runne softly till I end my song."

Drayton's poem bristles with happy thefts from *Eliza*.

³Compare the Song to Eliza:

"Bring hether the Pincke and purple Cullambine," etc.

In the following eclogue Drayton laments the death of Sidney under the name Elphin. This pastoral elegy is also under great obligations to Spenser; for it is inspired by the lament for Dido in *November* which Spenser, in his turn, had adapted from Marot. In his revised edition Drayton supplanted this lyric with an elegy far less Spenserian. In the fifth eclogue Rowland sings the praises of his mistress Idea. Drayton seems to have imitated Spenser's scheme of devoting the beginning and middle and end of his group of eclogues to personal love-poetry. The sixth eclogue begins with Gorbo's complaint against the degeneracy of the times; but Perkin assures him that virtue is not dead, and in earnest thereof sings the praises of Sidney's sister under the name Pandora. The seventh eclogue returns to the *Februarie* motive. Borril, an aged shepherd, reproves "Batte, a foolish wanton boy, but lately falne in love." In the next poem Drayton's sense of humour flashes forth with some very significant and charming verses. Humour, except for delicate touches in Theocritus, had been too much lacking in the pastoral. A few sly touches would have saved many a bucolic poem. Spenser pointed out this way of improving the pastoral by an attempt to enliven his eclogues with echoes of the merry notes of Chaucer. In *Februarie* he introduces a fable which he says is a poem of Chaucer's and which is, unquestionably, an imitation of Chaucer's manner. A similar attempt to infuse some of the racy qualities of Chaucer's narrative is found in the fable of the fox and the kid introduced in the *Maye*. In the ballad of *Bonnie Dowsabelle*, which Motto sang to Gordo, Drayton adopted Spenser's plan of enlivening the pastoral with a pseudo-antique, pseudo-Chaucerian story and carried it to perfection. It is an evident imitation of Chaucer's indulgent mirthmaking in *Sir Thopas*. So delicate is the interplay of cunning satire and fancy in these poems that one reads of

Chaucer's knight and Drayton's shepherdess with the smile of a man who loves a jest and the saucer-eyes of a child who loves a fairy-tale. This complex reaction may be best described to readers of our day as the *Alice-in-Wonderland* mood :—

“Far in the country of Arden
 There wonn'd a knight, hight Cassamen
 As bold as Isenbras.
 Fell was he and eager bent
 In battle and in tournament
 As was the good Sir Topas.
 He had, as antique stories tell,
 A daughter cleaped Dowsabell,
 A maiden fair and free.

“This maiden, in a morn betime
 Went forth when May was in her prime
 To get sweet setywall.
 The honeysuckle, the harlock,
 The lily and the lady-smock
 To deck her summer hall.
 Thus as she wander'd here and there
 Y-picking of the blooming brier,
 She chanced to espy
 A shepherd sitting on a bank,
 Like chanticleer he crowed crank,
 And pip'd full merrily.

“Full crisp and curled were his locks,
 His brows as white as Albion rocks
 So like a lover true.
 And piping still he spent the day,
 So merry as a popinjay,
 Which liked Dowsabelle ;
 That would she ought, or would she nought,
 This lad would never from her thought
 She in love-longing fell.
 At length she tucked up her frock,
 White as a lily was her smock,
 She drew the shepherd nigh.”

Thus easily love progresses in Arcadia. The lilt of the French *pastourelle* and of Henryson's *Robyn and Makyn* is

here found in a man who probably never saw them. The ninth eclogue of the edition of 1593¹ lapses into the conventional winter lament, like the *Januarie* and *December*. But the new eclogue² is full of Drayton's fresher fancy.³

Drayton employed Spenser's innovation of using a variety

¹ This is retained as No. 10 in B and C.

² Added as No. 9 in B and C.

³ I supplement the footnotes which have been quoted from the different editions with a few other characteristic examples of Drayton's revisions:—

Eclogue 1.

A. "Rejoycing all in this most joyfull tide :

C. "Highly rejoicing in this goodly tide."

Some critics, I imagine, would call the play on words in A a Spenserian trick.

Drayton shows an occasional tendency to revise quaint words or spellings that had doubtless been suggested by the *Shepheards Calender* or directly borrowed from it. Thus :

A. "Now am I like the knurrie-bulked Oke."

B. & C. "Now am I like the knotty aged Oak" (Eclogue 2.)

I may note here that Drayton, in my opinion, when he eliminates Spenserian touches, tends to strike out mere affectations rather than more skillful borrowings. His apparent sensitiveness in this matter often leads him to replace picturesque phrases with smooth commonplace.

A Latin motto, like those affixed to each eclogue in the *Shepheards Calender*, appears at the end of A but is omitted in B and C.

In the sixth eclogue B and C have some very Spenserian lines which do not appear in A.

"Nay stay, good Gorbo, Virtue is not dead,
Nor ben her friends gon al that wouned here
But to a nympe for succour she is fled,
Which her doth cherish and most holdeth deare," etc.

Eclogue 7.

A. "Why liest thou here, then, in thy loathsome care"
in B and C the Spenserian "ligs't" replaces "liest."

It is not worth while to multiply these examples. They seem to me to show: (1) that Drayton added as many Spenserian touches as he struck out; (2) that he never departed from the deepest influence of Spenser except in his imitation of the "Dido" elegy in his lament for Elphin, which he struck out entirely.

of stanzas. He had a whimsical sense of humour, a rich fancy for airy trifling, and a gift for careless popular song that saved him from some of the absurdities in the *Calender*. As a whole, his imitation is more readable mainly because Drayton controlled the materials which Spenser, in a time of dusk and groping, could only suggest.

Some of Drayton's friends, notably Wither, Browne, and Basse, made use of the new elements which Drayton developed in the eclogue, but we must first consider some intervening figures who followed other paths.

Richard Barnefield, a sensitive, somewhat decadent poet, who wrote a few pretty but not very original poems in his youth, and suddenly became silent, published in 1594 *The Affectionate Shepherd*, two eclogues which he claimed to be "nothing else but an imitation of Virgil in the second Eglogue of Alexis." The poem, a rather morbid complaint because a youth beloved by the poet is infatuated with one Guendolen, is really Virgilian only in outline, and is much more full of Sidney and Spenser. It is Spenserian sensuousness grown sickly, the characteristic work of an immature and somewhat academic poet.

Bodenham's delightful anthology *England's Helicon* (1614) contains a breezy little pastoral lyric by Henry Constable, which doubtless belongs to this period.¹ It is an uncommonly good imitation of the gay contest of Willy and Perigot in *August*.

A Pastorall Song Betweene Phillis and Amarillis.

"If every Maide were like to me,
Heigh hoe, hard of hart!
Both love and lovers scorn'd should be,
Scorners shall be sure of smart.
If every Maide were of my minde,
Heigh hoe, heigh hoe, lovely sweete!
Kindness is for maydens meete."

¹ Constable's period of active writing and publishing seems to have been in the early nineties.

In 1602 Francis Davison collected his own and his friends' verses in *A Poetical Rhapsody*. I have ventured already to group one of these poems, the Countess of Pembroke's, with the earliest imitations of the *Calender*. I should doubtless have been more consistent had I dared to treat all or most of these in similar fashion; for they bear the brand of earlier Spenserianism. Davison included an eclogue of his own, closely in the manner of *Januarie*, an *Eclogue* [signed A. W.] *made long since upon the death of Sir Phillip Sidney*, in which Thenot and Perin speak in the language of the *Calender* and lament Colin's silence because of his poverty and loss of love; an *Eglogue by Ignoto*, in which shepherd and herdman debate in the manner and metre of similar characters in *Julye*, and a fragmentary *Eglogue Concerning Olde Age* in imitation of *Februarie*. This last, in which Perin and Wrenock quarrel on a theme the most human in pastoral, is, in spite of its wholesale borrowings from the *Shepherds Calender*, vigorous and attractive. Wrenock upbraids Perin, as aged Thenot had chided Cuddie, for irreverence to white hairs. Perin replies in the exultant and unsympathetic pride of youth:—

“ Ah Thenot, be not all thy teeth on edge,
 To see youngths folke to sport in pastimes gay?
 To pitch the Barre, to throwe the weightie fledge
 To dance with Phillis all the holli-day?”¹

¹Cf. Cuddie:

“ Ah, foolish old man ! I scorne thy skill,

 But were thy yeares greene, as now beene mine,
 To other delights they would encline :
 Tho wouldest thou learne to caroll of love,
 And hery with hymnes thy lasses glove :
 Tho wouldest thou pype of Phyllis prayse.”

Note also that the poet here mistakenly uses the name “Thenot” from Spenser instead of his own “Wrenock.”

William Basse was almost unknown even to thorough students of literature until his works were collected for the first time by Mr. Bond.¹ Hitherto his memory has existed almost solely through his famous lines on Shakespeare. His most ambitious work was devoted to pastorals of the Spenserian type. In 1602 appeared his *Three Pastoral Elegies of Anander, Anetor, and Muridella*. An introductory stanza is explicit in its acknowledgment of the poet's master, telling us how he had "Beene nursed up in Colins lore." These poems, in fluent *ottava rima*, do not fall very clearly within the type of pastoral which we are discussing. From our point of view the most interesting passage is a beautiful and sensuous, if somewhat eccentric, description of Muridella's body, in a manner slightly reminiscent of Spenser's physiological allegory of the *House of Alma* (the soul) in the *Faërie Queene*.² This is a mingling of the manner of pastoral and *Faërie Queene* which we shall see carried out even more fully in the eclogues of Phineas Fletcher. Basse's third elegy contains a lament for Colin. In 1653 nine eclogues were collected and published, perhaps posthumously. In these Basse followed Spenser much more closely. He arranged them under two headings: under the days of the week, in imitation of the arrangement by months of the *Shepheards Calender*, or under some particular virtue, as Spenser had done with each book of the *Faërie Queene*. In his *Dedication* he did not fail to speak of

"The famous Shepheard Collin, whome we looke
Never to match, (though follow him we may
That follow sheep, and carry scrip and hooke)."

¹ *The Poetical Works of William Basse now for the first time collected and edited with an introduction and notes by R. Warwick Bond.* London, 1893, Ellis and Elvey.

² *F. Q.*: bk. 2, c. ix. Basse: *Elegie*, II. This canto of Spenser was also the source of Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island*. The resemblance between the passage in Basse's elegy and Spenser's is noted by Mr. Bond in his edition of Basse: P. 58, footnote.

Perhaps it was this humility which led him to name himself a diminutive Colin, Colliden. Each eclogue is followed by Latin emblems after the fashion of Spenser's. Under the heading *Munday*, in eclogue one, Colliden laments, in the orthodox way, the ill-success of his love-making with Laurinella. But this eclogue is not merely erotic poetry. It is in celebration of "true and chast"; and the moral gravity of Basse is more notable than that of any Spenserian we have hitherto noticed. Colliden's lament is interrupted by Wilkin, who sings a graceful lyric with the disgruntled swain. Under *Tuesday*, in eclogue three, Meliden and Chantlet have a debate about lowland and highland, as did Thomalin and Morrell in *Julye*; Chantlet speaks eloquently of the virtues of the dales and exalts *Contentment*. In the last eclogue, under the heading *Humility*, Colliden confides to Hobbinoll his remorse for having written so many amorous lays full of the false joys of life. Songs, however beautiful, are worthless unless they benefit mankind.

Whether or not Basse was a personal friend of the members of Drayton's group, a matter possible but not proven, he owes something to Drayton's influence as well as to Spenser's, and falls in with Browne and Wither, men whom we have already described as bringing the eclogues of the type of the *Calender* to their highest stage of development. Basse had much less of the light touch and the gift for pure song, but he shared with these associates that lofty puritanism which speaks out most confidently in Wither, and above all that sturdy belief in the nobility of poetry which was the slogan of the group.

Chronology again forces us to turn for a moment from the climacteric development of the Spenserian pastoral to some minor efforts. The accession of James the First, in 1603, was greeted by Henry Chettle's *Englandes Mourning Garment: Worne here by plaine Shepheards: in memorie of*

their sacred Mistresse. Elizebeth, Queene of Vertue while shee lived, and Theame of Sorrow, being dead. To which is added the true manner of her Emperiall Funerall. After which foloweth the Shepherds Spring-Song, for entertainment of King James our most potent Sovereigne. Dedicated to all that loved the deceased Queen. This work, a mixture of prose and verse, contains an eclogue element in which our old friends Colin and Thenot appear. Other poets of the period are introduced under pastoral names.

In the same year Edward Fairfax is said, on the authority of his son,¹ to have written twelve eclogues, all of which are now lost but two. These are of that particular Spenserian cast which exploited religious allegory in the harsh vein of Mantuan.

John Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, although it falls outside our field, the formal eclogue, is of such general importance in pastoral literature that it cannot go unmentioned. Fletcher's beautiful though decadent drama certainly owes some of its sweetness to Spenserian honey. An exquisite lyric at the end has a flower-passage which resembles that in the Song to Eliza in *Aprile*. At the concourse of happy shepherds the high-priest bids them

"Sing to the God of Sheep, that happy lay,
That honest Dorus taught ye, Dorus, he
That was the soul and god of melodie."

Dorus has not unreasonably been conjectured by Grosart to be Spenser. In one stanza of this song lies the whole fascination of the pastoral longing. It is a praise of Pan :—

"He is great, and he is just,
He is ever good and must
Thus be honoured : Daffadillies,

¹ William Fairfax's annotations on his father's pastorals are preserved in a letter from Brian Fairfax to Bishop Atterbury (1704). William Fairfax says that they were written in the first year of King James. They were never published during Fairfax's lifetime, at least.

Roses, Pinks, and loved Lillies
 Let us fling
 Whilest we sing,
 Ever holy,
 Ever holy,
 Ever honour'd ever young
 Thus great Pan is ever sung."¹

After 1603 the strict Spenserian pastoral seems not to have been written for fully ten years. But in 1614 appeared William Browne's *Shepheards Pipe*, which takes rank with Drayton's *Shepheards Garland* as one of the best productions of this type. The first eclogue tells how

"Roget and Willie both ymet
 Upon a greeny ley
 With roundelays and tales are set
 To spend the length of day."²

Willy (Browne) opens with the usual exhortation, so familiar to readers of the Spenserian pastoral, to sing and to praise the fair season. We can see how admirably Browne carries on the turn given to Spenserian pastoralism by Drayton, the lightness, the brighter swifter play of fancy, the greater impulse towards pure song. Roget replies with a surliness that is in admirable keeping with the disgruntled Wither, whose virulent moral satires were not relished by his foes. Wither, indeed, had been imprisoned in 1613 for his frankness, and this eclogue was doubtless intended as a comforting tribute. Roget is, however, finally persuaded to sing, in a lighter vein,

". . . What I did here
 Song agone in Janivere
 Of a skilful aged sire,
 As we toasted by the fire."

¹ Besides general similarity of flowers note the particular phrase "loved lillies" in Spenser's Song to Eliza.

² Arguments of this type precede each eclogue as in the *Faërie Queene* and the *Shepheards Garland* of 1593.

Roget proceeds to retail a Chaucerian narrative of Thomas Occleve's, which Browne merely transcribes with slight modernizations. Browne, like Drayton, took the hint of *Februarie* and sought to enliven his pastorals by the introduction of a Chaucerian tale. The second eclogue is a sprightly dialogue between Willie and Jockie who complain of the depredations of a "swinish lout." Then follows a beautiful eclogue in which Piers and Thomalin bemoan the poverty of old Neddy, a figure like Spenser's Thenot and Diggon Davy. It is interesting, by comparing this light but tender lyric with the cumbersome lines of its nearest model, the gloomy *September*, to see in what way the pastoral had progressed :—

Piers. "Yet see, yonder (though unwist)
Some man cometh in the mist ;
Hast thou him beheld ?
See he crosseth o'er the land
With a dog and staff in hand
Limping for his eld."

Thomalin. "Yes, I see him, and do know him,
And we all do rev'rence owe him,
'Tis the aged sire
Neddy, that was wont to make
Such great feasting at the wake,
And the blessing-fire.
Good old man ! See he walks
Painful and among the balks,
Picking locks of wool !
I have known the day when he
Had as much as any three ;
When their lofts were full.

"Wilkin's cote his dairy was
For a dwelling it may pass
With the best in town.
Curds and cream with other cheer
Have I had there in the year
For a greeny gown.
Lasses kept it, as again

Were not fitted on the plain
 For a lusty dance.
 And at parting home would take us,
 Flawns or syllabubs to make us
 For our jouissance.’’

The fourth eclogue contains a pastoral elegy.¹ The fifth eclogue follows Spenser’s *October* in its complaint against the times and in its lofty faith in the nobility of poetry, the favorite credo of Drayton, Basse, Wither, and all the members of this group. Cuttie (Christopher Brooke) is urged to turn from lowly pastoral to the deep notes of the epic. Poor Brooke, who never wrote even a tolerable pastoral, is made to reply with dramatic appropriateness enough :—

“ It shall content me on these happy downs
 To sing the strife for garland, not for crowns.”

He complains, like Cuddie in *October*, of the languid interest in poetry. Willy retorts with a fine scorn that doubtless owes some of its inspiration to the eloquence of Piers in *October*, but which associates itself particularly with the utterances of Drayton’s group, because they reiterated their proud devotion to poetry so frequently and with such invincible enthusiasm. The sixth eclogue attempts an infusion of humour, an element with which Drayton and his friends wisely attempted to revive the drooping pastoral.

“ Philos of his dog doth brag
 For having many feats,
 The while the cur undoes his bag
 And all his dinner eats.”

The last eclogue treats of Palinode’s attempts to wean Hobbinoll from his love for a wanton girl.

Like Drayton, Browne used the homely touches with more felicity than Spenser. He talked with the good wives

¹ In the stanza *ababbecdd* used by Basse, discussed in note above (p. 253).

and conned their lore about Queen Mab. He lingered by the May-poles and watched real maidens and their brown lovers at delightful play. From Browne and Drayton, Robert Herrick certainly learned a lesson or two.

Browne's friends, Christopher Brooke and John Davies of Hereford, wrote inferior eclogues, of the general Spenserian type, which may be classed with the *October* group. High astounding terms were confidently expected from Brooke. But his aspiration died in a handful of commonplace verses. John Davies of Hereford produced *An Eclogue* between "Young Willy" and "Old Wrenocke," clumsy with the archaisms and dialect words of the *Calender*. Davies was a lover of the narrow streets of London-town, and was more picturesque when he allegorized the gluttons and toppers of the city than when he wrote of shepherds. Wrenocke incites the despondent Willy to sing. A lad who sang less well than thou or I, won Venus on Mount Ida:—

"So thou maiest with thy pas'trall Minstrelsy
Draw to thee Bonnibels as smirke as hy."

Willy is reassured, whereupon the worldly-wise Wrenocke closes the discussion with:—

"Agreed deare Willy, gent and debonaire,
Wee'l hence : for rheumaticke now fares the Aire."

George Wither spent his prison-months in composing his prettiest poems, including *The Shepheards Hunting* (1622).¹ Wither strayed farther away from the Spenserian pastoral than his friends except when he sounded the favorite *October* note. In the first eclogue, Willy laments the imprisonment of Philarete, but finds his friend rejoicing in steadfast freedom of mind. In the second eclogue, Cuddy

¹Two of its five eclogues had appeared in Browne's *Shepheards Pipe* (1614).

brings words of comfort. In this and the following poem, Philarete explains allegorically the cause of his imprisonment. Eclogues four and five sing the credo of the group of Drayton. The season is ripe for melody :—

“Corydon with his bold rout
 Hath already been about.

 Now the dairy-wenches dream
 Of their strawberries and cream.

 I do here this very day
 Many learned grooms do wend
 For the garlands to contend
 Which a nymph that hight Desart,
 Long a stranger in this part,
 With her own fair hand hath wrought
 A rare work, they say, past thought,
 As appeareth by the name,
 For she calls them wreathes of fame,

 She hath wove in Daphne’s tree,
 That they may not blasted be.
 Which with thyme she edged about,
 Lest the work should ravel out,
 And that it might wither never
 Intermix’d it with live-ever.”

In Wither Puritanism brightened, if possible, the clear springs of his early song. A youthful worship of sensuous beauty and moral fervour linked hands happily in the days of his rippling pastorals.

With Phineas Fletcher we find a direct classical influence as well as Spenserian, a greater languor, and the marks of decline. Fletcher was one of those poets who, in their youth, lent a readier ear to the plaints of the shepherd Colin than to the high seriousness of the *Faërie Queene*.¹ But there came a time when the young pastor repented his

¹ See his lyric *To My Beloved Thenot in Answer of His Verse*.

amorous days and sealed high resolves with a boyish lyric of regretful farewell.¹

The *Piscatorie Eglogs* were written at the time when Fletcher was painfully turning away from his love-lyrics to fervent religious poetry full of a sensuous love for Christ, and bitter with the rank gall of his hatred for the Catholic Church. In point of style they represent a change from his earlier devotion to the *Shepherds Calender*, and are more full of the midsummer music of the *Faërie Queene* than of the thin April pipings of Spenser's eclogues. In the *Purple Island*,² the ingenious and eccentric, though often beautiful epic in which Fletcher celebrated the glories of man's body and soul and of his Maker, the pastoral setting and the characters of the *Piscatorie Eglogs* were largely retained to begin and to close each canto. It is the *Eglogs* only, however, which concern us here.

The sources of the *Piscatorie Eglogs* are more varied than those of the usual Spenserian pastoral. The scheme of exchanging shepherds for fishers was used, to a slight degree, by Theocritus (Idyll 21), and was regularly adopted by Sannazaro in his *Egloga Piscatoria* (1526). The work of Sannazaro doubtless suggested the general idea to Fletcher. The Italian poet, with his angler-substitutes, had brought some freshness into the pastoral. The influence of Virgil, too, was quite as potent as that of Spenser. Fletcher made use of a great variety of stanzas,³ most of which are modelled upon the Spenserian.

¹ See *To Mr. Jas. Tomkins*. These poems were published in *Poeticall Miscellanies* (1633) along with the *Piscatorie Eglogs*, but they clearly fell within his earliest period, from his first verses to the time when the *Eglogs* were begun.

² The *Purple Island*, too, was published in 1633. But though I believe Fletcher to have begun it in a very early period, I feel certain that it was continued throughout his literary career, and was, in its last form, his maturest product.

³ To the *ab ab bc bc* stanza Spenser added his final alexandrine, *C*.

The sixth eclogue, in which the young poet is exhorted to turn from earthly loves, is attractively earnest. Very charming is the eighth eclogue, a series of song-contests between shepherds and fishers. But the mingling of classical influence has made these pastorals seem languorous when we remember the sprightly native notes of Drayton.

The pastoral might have been honored by Thomas Randolph had he lived to fulfill the promise of his youth. Though, in general, a devoted son of Ben, he contributed a Spenserian eclogue between Collen and Thenot to the *Annalia Dubrensia*, or *Celebration of Captain Robert Dover's Cotswold Games* (1636).

In 1646 *The Shepheards Oracles* by Francis Quarles was published posthumously.¹ It is not difficult to understand the poet's reluctance to print it. It is a versified religious pamphlet in which outlandish shepherds, allegorical figures for various sects, abuse each other roundly. Catholicism, of course, is very roughly handled. The influence of Spenser is remote but perceptible. Occasionally there is some really worthy poetry when Quarles gives himself an opportunity to write in that peculiar stiff and affected quaintness that has made his *Emblems* famous. Such is the case when Pan (Christ) is wooed and reconciled by Gentilla (the Gentiles) in the third eclogue. Some of the more satirical eclogues have a coarse spiritedness that is entertaining. Catholic and Protestant revile each other for being lean or fat after the manner of Piers and Palinode in Spenser's *Maye*. Quarles makes allegories of a Biblical type² and one on the

Fletcher often adopted the same method of adding an alexandrine to current forms. In these eclogues he uses *ababcC*, *ababb*, *ababB*, *ababbccC*, *abbaabb*, *ababcc*, *abaabbccc*, *ubababccC*, *ababbbaaccC*. Fletcher's stanza-forms are well discussed by Prof. E. P. Morton, *The Spenserian Stanza before 1700*, *Modern Philology*, May, 1907.

¹ Said to have been published during Q's lifetime without his consent.

² Eclogue 5. The allegory of the grain and the husks.

model of Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island* and its principal source, Spenser's *House of Alma*.¹ But the essential elements of the Spenserian pastoral have fled. There is nothing left here but crude polemics and raw vigour in his jangling couplets.

In 1647 Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, author of the huge *Platonical Song of the Soul* in Spenserian stanzas, and a prominent figure in a very important reaction against the materialism of Descartes and Hobbes, published not only his long philosophical poem but a group of minor verses. One of these was an eclogue in imitation of *March*, where Thomalin tells Willye how he shot at the little Love, as he fluttered in the bushes, and of Cupid's woeful revenge.² More, however, adds a very interesting and unmistakably autobiographical conclusion of his own. *Cupid's Conflict* opens with a conversation between Mela and Cleanthes like that of Spenser's shepherds, in which one exhorts the other to throw aside melancholy and enjoy the bright season.

"Mela, my dear! why been thy looks so sad?"

Mela, like Thomalin, answers by describing how he met Love. One day, as he wandered near a pretty stream —

"Lo! on the other side in thickest bushes
A mighty noise! with that a naked swain
With blew and purple wings streight rudely rushes."³

¹ Eclogue 7. The allegory of Kephalos or the Isle of Man.

² Spenser's model for this eclogue, as Thomas Warton noted, was Bion.

³ Cf. *March* :

"At length within an Yvie todde,
(There shrouded was the little god),
I heard a busy bustling."

Also :

"Where in a bush he did him hide,
With wings of pirlpe and of blew ;"

The remainder of More's eclogue, although uneven in quality, is an interesting variation on *March*. Love abused Mela for wasting his youth and for hating this life's delight. "If I had pierced you," he said, "you would have been happy, and all the world

" Would wonder at thy gracefull quill.
 But now thy riddles all men do neglect,
 Thy rugged lines of all do ly forlorn.
 Unwelcomed lines that rudely do detect
 The Reader's ignorance. Men holden scorn
 To be so often non-plus'd or to spell,
 And on one stanza a whole age to dwell."

Mela made sturdy answer. "I'll cherish my own ideals,

" And if my notions clear though rudely thrown
 And loosely scattered in my poesie
 May lend men light till the dead night be gone.
 And morning fresh with roses strew the sky :
 It is enough, I meant no trimmer frame
 Nor by nice needle-work to seek a name."

It is impossible for one who knows the lofty but somewhat ineffectual life-work of More to disbelieve in the autobiographical seriousness of this pastoral allegory.²

and :

" With that sprang forth a naked swayne."
 At's snowy back the boy a quiver wore
 Right fairly wrought and gilded all with gold :
 A silver bow in his left hand he bore."¹

¹ Cf. *March* :

" His gylden quiver at his backe
 And silver bowe which was but slacke."

² I choose this place to interject a few vagabond references :—

Richard Braithwaite's *Shepheards Tales* (1621) are formal eclogues which show some Spenserian influence but which do not seem to me to have either the quality or the significance which would warrant detailed treatment.

Dr. William Bedell, Bishop of Kilmore, wrote an imitation of the

The twilight of the Spenserian pastoral was murky enough. Imitations of the *Shepherds Calender* declined and grew rare, not because a distaste for Spenser sprang up, but because a variety of literary interests attracted men elsewhere. Fanshawe, Chamberlayne, Ayres affected the pure Elizabethan style. There were countless Marinists with a passion for tasteless conceits. Neo-classical verse, with Waller and Denham at its head, was advancing, not in triumph, as some writers seem to fancy, but with a painful struggle against many counter influences. Augustanism did not win the field until Pope struck the final blows. The age of the Restoration and Revolution had a corresponding literary age of anarchy. Many poets wrote in several distinct styles. Dryden, in his criticism, typifies finely the uneasy self-doubt of many of the writers.

Pastoral eclogues abounded throughout this period, and the Spenserian eclogue was cultivated to a certain extent. In 1661 was published an extraordinary medley, by a writer calling himself Bocalini, entitled *To Carole or an extract of a letter sent from Parnassus Wherein are contained Severall Epigrams, Odes, etc., upon His Majesty's Coronation*. In this eccentric performance Homer speaks in Greek verse, Virgil, Ovid, and Martial in Latin verse, while Spenser and

Shepherds Calender called *A Protestant Memorial of The Shepherds Tale of the Powder-Plot*, which was not published till 1713. Unfortunately I have been unable to obtain this work. My only information concerning it is in Todd's edition of Spenser, vol. 1, p. clxxxii (1805).

Bishop Hall, the satirist, wrote a pastoral lyric in praise of Bedell's imitation which itself owes something to Spenser's eclogues. See Hall's poems, Grossart edition. Prof. Schelling (*Eliz. Drama*, 1, 15) notes the influence of the *Calender* on Rollinson's comedy *Sylvanus* and W. W. Greg (*Pastoral and Pastoral Drama*, p. 360), quotes lines from Rutter's pastoral drama *The Shepherds Holiday* (1635) as reminiscent of Spenser. These may be grouped with my observations on Peele and John Fletcher as showing the occasional incursion of the Spenserian eclogue on the pastoral drama.

Quarles are the English representatives. Spenser is given an eclogue in which Thenot and Hobbinoll mouth archaisms of the most approved sort. Of a very different order is a *Pastoral Written at Dublin in May 1682*, printed by Nahum Tate in his collection of *Poems by Several Hands* (1685), in which the Spenserian tradition, such as it is, is thoroughly reconciled with Augustanism. The same type of remote Spenserianism gives a sallow tinge to an eclogue *On the Death of Mr. Oldham*, printed in Dryden's *Sylvæ or Second Part of Poeticall Miscellanies* (1685). These last two pastorals may be taken as typical of a considerable number of poems which attempted to follow Spenser at a distance and were also indebted to Virgil. These lead us directly to the eclogues of Ambrose Philips, Pope, Gay, Moses Browne and many more in which Virgil gradually gained the ascendancy, greatly to the detriment of bucolic poetry.

The main influence of the *Shepherds Calender* was upon the formal eclogue. Spenser put new life into the pastoral by an arrangement of the eclogues under the headings of months, by an effort to bring more nature in with the attempted but imperfect correspondence of month and mood, by rendering the pastoral thoroughly English through the medium of a new type of language, less academic and more native, and by taking the crown from the Roman Tityrus, Virgil, and placing it on the head of the English Tityrus, Chaucer. Spenser also suggested the possibility of saving the pastoral by a wholesome infusion of Chaucerian humour and by the use of the light lyrical spirit caught from Marot. But these innovations were too radical for a young poet to perfect. After some stumbling imitations by early followers, Drayton and his group adroitly chose these most essential innovations of Spenser's and brought the English eclogues to their climax of development. The pastoral was never more English and more Spenserian. With the min-

gling of classical influences and the less discerning imitations of Phineas Fletcher and Quarles, the Spenserian eclogue rapidly degenerated. A supreme poet, taking up the work where Spenser and Drayton's group had left it, would have created perhaps the greatest pastoral of the world's literature, and might have saved this type of poetry from the disgrace of dilettanteism. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* show how well Milton could have achieved the light pastoral. But when he wrote his perfect *Lycidas*¹ he drew far more from classical literature than from Spenser and his followers. There remained no one who could perform the task at the vital moment, and the formal eclogue has perished.

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¹On the classical and Spenserian influences on *Lycidas* cf. Dr. J. H. Hanford, *Pastoral Elegy*, to appear in these *Publications*, xxv, 3.